

N O R T H C A R O L I N A

Guide to Open Government and Public Records



Roy Cooper
North Carolina Attorney General

Dear friends:

North Carolina's public records laws are critical to operating a fair and open government and require careful study and practice to uphold.

My office, together with the North Carolina Press Association, has published this guide to help make sure people are allowed to watch their government in action.



Here you will find basic information on the laws and answers to commonly asked questions regarding access to public records and meetings.

The spirit with which public officials work to comply with the law is as important as the law itself. Recognizing that the public's business should be done in the open and honoring requests for help serves the people as well as those who seek to inform them.

In fact, the policy of the state of North Carolina is to allow public access to the activities of government.

In other words, when in doubt about how to interpret the state's open records and meetings laws – always work to resolve the question in favor of openness.

Strong laws and a commitment to openness will ensure that North Carolina residents are informed about government's business. Thank you for reviewing the laws and for your public service to your community and the people of North Carolina.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature of Roy Cooper in cursive script.

Roy Cooper

A publication of the North Carolina Attorney General's Office and the North Carolina Press Association

